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Mexico BSE Update (Third Edition)

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Report Highlights:

Mexico has reopened its market to imports of U.S. boneless beef from cattle under 30 months of age. Additionally, new import requirements for pet foods have been established following a temporary ban on pet food imports.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Mexico [MX1]
[MX]

IMPORTS OF BONELESS BEEF RESUME

On March 3, 2004, Mexico's Secretariat of Agriculture (SAGARPA) announced that it would allow imports of boneless beef from cattle under 30 months of age to resume. SAGARPA banned imports of bovine products on December 24, 2003, following the detection of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Washington State. In its press release, SAGARPA indicated that through March 15, 2004, shipments would only be allowed to cross between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. through the ports of Tijuana, Nogales, Ciudad Juarez, Colombia, Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa, and Puerto Morelos. After March 15 shipments will be permitted to cross during normal port hours and through the 12 authorized crossing points as before. The GOM has established new certification requirements for boneless beef, a full listing of import requirements is provided below.

Present original Sanitary Certificate from the official authority of the country of origin that indicates:

- 1) That the product is of U.S. origin or legally imported from Australia or New Zealand from plants approved by the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food.
- 2) That the animals from which the product was obtained were slaughtered in installations authorized by the Department of Agriculture of the United States (USDA) and are dedicated exclusively to the slaughter of animals under the age of 30 months or that the plant has acceptable procedures for complete segregation that permits the official from USDA to identify and select the products to be exported.
- 3) That the product was obtained from animals of 30 months or less of age, determined by means of records that demonstrate the age or through the post-mortem inspection in which it must be verified that the animals from which the product was obtained have two incisive permanent teeth or less.
- 4) That in the country of origin of the product there exist animal health regulations in force that prohibit the feeding of ruminants with meals made from meat and bone or skin rinds of ruminant origin.
- 5) That the animals from which the product was obtained, were not stunned, by means of gas injection in the cranial cavity or cutting of the spinal cord by laceration of the central nervous tissue, by means of introducing a sharp cutting instrument in the cranial cavity.
- 6) That the product to be exported does not contain meat trimmings, meat from advanced meat recovery, mechanically separated meat and ground meat.
- 7) Each shipment must be submitted for inspection by official personnel of the Office of Inspection of Animal and Plant Health to verify the fulfillment of that indicated in NOM-030-ZOO-1995 "Specifications and procedures for the verification of imported meat, carcasses, viscera, and offals at animal health verification points.
- 8) The shipment and documentation must comply with the regulations established in article 24 of the Federal Law of Animal Health.
- 9) The inspection of the merchandise will be performed by officials from SAGARPA.
- 10) Imports of deboned meat will only be permitted from animals that have been slaughtered on or after March 5, 2004.

Veal Imports Not Yet Allowed

SAGARPA's press release announcing the partial lifting of the BSE ban indicated that imports of veal would also be permitted. Officials at SAGARPA have since confirmed that that was a mistake and imports of veal are not currently permitted.

The BSE Banned List Still in Flux

Mexico's original banned product list has been modified on an ad hoc basis since the original ban. The following products are currently banned by SAGARPA.

- Live cattle
- Bone-in meat
- Boneless meat from cattle 30 months of age or older
- Bovine viscera
- Bovine offal
- Bovine meat preparations (except for those that qualify as boneless meat from cattle under 30 months of age)
- Products derived from non-protein-free tallow
- Protein-free tallow fit for human consumption
- Gelatin and collagen prepared from bone
- Ruminant meal
- Small ruminants (added since the initial ban)
- Meat from small ruminants (added since the initial ban)

SAGARPA has stated that the following products are exempt from the ban.

- Milk
- Dairy products
- Semen
- Embryos
- Protein-free tallow not fit for human consumption
- Dicalcium phosphate (DCP)
- Skins and hides
- Gelatin and collagen obtained from hides and skins

Secretariat of Health Issues Its Own Ban

The Secretariat of Health has provided its own list of banned products, which appears to conflict in some areas with the items that SAGARPA has permitted. The Office of Agricultural Affairs is in the process of discussing these differences with the Secretariat of Health. Exporters should work closely with their customers and customs brokers before shipping their products to ensure that shipments will be permitted to enter Mexico. A list of the Secretariat of Health's banned products of bovine origin follows:

- Hormones
- Insulin
- Enzymes for digestive therapy
- Gel capsules made from cartilage or bone
- Sutures
- Laboratory growth media
- Bile extracts
- Gelatin (conflict with SAGARPA)
- Any products regulated by the Secretariat of Health made from Specified Risk Materials
- Food supplements
- Blood serum
- Common ingredients in beauty products
- Dehydrated broth (subject to prior notice)
- Instant soups (subject to prior notice)

Requirements for Pet Food Finally Established

There has been considerable confusion surrounding the requirements for importing pet food since the BSE ban was implemented. Most recently, the GOM halted the issuance of pet food import permits while it verified the certification of certain rendering plants in the United States to ensure that they did not process ruminant proteins. The GOM now indicates that it has a list of approved rendering plants from which animal origin meals can be sourced for pet foods and has issued a revised set of import requirements. The following requirements are provisional and will be in effect until May 4, 2004, at which time SAGARPA may opt to modify these requirements.

COURTESY TRANSLATION

SPECIES	ANY	
FUNCTION/PRODUCT	BALANCED FEED	
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
COUNTRY OF SHIPMENT	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
COMBINATION	1-1-196-USA-USA	LEGEND CODE 001-87

REQUIREMENTS

Present original Health Certificate from the official authority of the country of origin that indicates:

- 1) That the raw material used to elaborate the product comes from the country of origin indicated in the certificate.
- 2) That the product does not contain RUMINANT PROTEINS OR ANY OTHER COMPONENT OF RUMINANT ORIGIN (e.g., milk or protein from milk). The balanced feeds for non-ruminant species are exempt of this requirement.
- 3) That the meal with which the balanced feed was elaborated comes from a plant approved by SAGARPA (NOM 060-ZOO-1999)
- 4) That the establishment in which the balanced feed is elaborated has records of each of the lots acquired of raw material and sales records of the balanced feed (NOM 060-ZOO-1999)

Other requirements to be fulfilled:

- 5) Present original and copy of the quality control certificate from the manufacturer. The personnel from the Office of Animal Health Inspection will only keep the copy once product is verified.
- 6) Must show copy of the document that records the product (registration card) issued by the General Direction of Animal Health and in the case the registration card was issued more than 1 year ago, present the quality rating of the product issued by an official medical veterinarian approved as a verification unit or by an authorized medical veterinarian in the area of industrial establishments (Area 08), commercial (Area 09), with a validity of 12 months beginning from the date it was issued. Registration of the product must be in accordance with the Agreement of Improved Rules, published in the *Diario Oficial* (Mexico's Federal Register) on July 23, 1999; and with the Federal Law of Animal Health published on June 12, 2000.

- 7) The concentrated and balanced food formulated with ingredients of plant origin, fish meal and or those that have vitamins and minerals added, are exempt from the requirements relative to the registration and quality rating issued by a medical veterinarian approved as an verification unit or by an authorized medical veterinarian in the area of industrial establishments.
- 8) The personnel from the Office of Animal Health Inspection will verify that the registration card and/or manufacturer's label of the product show the composition. If the product is presented with a label and contains ruminant protein, it should contain a statement that indicates that it is prohibited for feeding it to ruminants. The product for feeding ruminants presented with a label should indicate the origin and animal species from which the product was processed.
- 9) The shipment and the documentation should comply with the regulations established in the Article 24 of the Federal Law of Animal Health.
- 10) If, during the physical or document inspection, ruminant protein is detected in the product or any other ingredient of ruminant origin, except milk and milk proteins, THE IMPORTATION WILL NOT BE AUTHORIZED.